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The Voice of the Phi Sigma -- 1879 -- Volume 02, No. 03

Phi Sigma

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Sapientiam Diligentes.

25 NW 1879

THE VOICE



of the

PHI SIGMA

Read Nov. 25, 1879

Editor - Mr. H. Beard.

Two weeks have passed, and another number of the ~~paper~~ Voice is before us. As editor our path has been pleasant but not easy. Numbers one & two of our second volume as they were read before us, verily made us tremble in our shoes to think of the necessity of following those excellent papers. But fellow members ~~are~~ cheerfully give you our best: knowing that you know that this ^{practice makes perfect} is our first paper, but indeed may it not be our last.

Our Paper is one of the best features of our class work - it is interesting and not only that but it is also one of the surest roads to improvement. Since our last number, we have held two very good meetings. At the first we had some friends with us, Mr. Wilson having brought two gentlemen with him. Let the rest of the members put on their thinking caps and find some young men who would perhaps be eligible as members (if the class thought fit to elect them as such) and invite them to come to one of the class meetings.

One thing in reference to new members we think it is necessary not only to get studious members, but also those who will work well with us. ~~Let them~~

to vote intelligently. At that meeting we heard read, the last number of our paper edited by Mr. Gulun who gave us a somewhat varied table of contents. — This is a good idea, and we would suggest, that our members in the future remember this when about editorial work, trying to make the paper fresh and interesting. We know that "Variety is the spice of life" therefore probably it will add flavor to our paper.

The points we will notice in the last class meeting are History and readings. Our history though good and of course instructing, has not been of that benefit to us that it would have been, had we studied it more. Mr. Sawyer's part showed careful work though there was room for further improvement. Let the members try and follow his example — give ^{their} ~~our~~ history from memory or at least give without hesitation what they do know, no matter how little. Better a little less than much in a muddle. As to Readings Mr. G. & Beard's selection ^{from the Tribune} was very interesting, and leads us to suggest ask for more of the same nature. The Newspapers have some very interesting letters on different subjects and often very

useful ones, on all subjects. Travel
inventions, Historical, &c &c which
would be well worth reading.

Now fellow Phisignites think of these
suggestions and see if they ^{are} not
some good to be got ~~ought~~ out of
them. Remember our meetings ^{are} our
chance for improvement.

Remember that if we would be
great & good we must have wisdom.
If we would do good to others we
must have enough for ourselves and
to spare.

" Thy soul must overflow
If thou another's soul wouldst reach;
It needs the overflow of heart -
To give the lips full speech "

Think truly, and thy thoughts
Shall the world's fortune feed;
Speak truly, and each word of thine
Shall be a fruitful seed;
Live truly, and thy life shall be,
A great and noble creed

Gleanings.

The world is a looking glass, and gives back
to every man the reflection of his own
face. Thrown at it and it will turn and
look surly upon you. Laugh at it, and
with it, and it is a pleasant and kind
Companion! ————

That thou may'st injure no man
dove like be
And serpent-like, that none may
injure thee! Couper

~~~~~

Truth Crushed to earth shall rise again  
The eternal years of God are hers  
But error wounded writhes with pain  
And dies among his worshippers.  
Bryant.

When bad men combine, the good must  
associate, else they will fall one by  
one, an unjust sacrifice in a confus-  
tible struggle. E Burke.

~~~~~

Much may be made of a Scotchman
if he be caught young. Dr Johnson.

A little girl who had received a present
of rabbits, when she went to bed,
prayed: "O God! we thank thee especially
for the rabbits - all but the cage
we had that before."

~~~~~



## Imagination

Who does not remember with what eagerness the stories of childhood were welcomed? What a fascination there was, even in the most terribly those which curdled our blood and made our very hair stand on end.

The appetite for these is curable with, if not earlier than, the longings for those "generous slices" of bread and butter plentifully overspread with molasses; and it continues with more or less force long after the sweet tooth and indeed after all the other teeth are "faded and gone". If Mark Twain is to be believed, and we have always placed implicit reliance upon his statements believing him to be a man of truth and veracity, all Babydom is filled with bright visions of the ineffable bliss which would result from a successful attempt to swallow the toes and even the whole foot of the subject. In this respect Babydom is phelosophic in that it attempts to realize the great object of domestic economy, namely, to "make the two ends meet".

But if we cannot remember as far back as to recall our eagerness for tales we can find it from other sources. Many Sunday School books have treated incidentally upon it and as they always tell the truth there will be no necessity for further proof. We will attempt to give the gist of



what we have gleaned from them, Grandfather or  
Mr. Noble wants to know if Charles and  
James and Henry would like to hear a  
story. "O yes, please to tell us a story," cry  
Charles and James and Henry all together.  
You will find this in nearly all Sunday  
School books that touch upon this subject.  
It must be true. A Kensington has pictured  
for us a similar scene as it was in his  
day. We scarcely need to say we prefer  
the latter. It is as follows: — "By night

The village matron, round the blazing hearth,  
Suspends the infant audience with her tale,  
Breathing astonishment of witching rhymes,  
And evil spirits, of the death-bed call  
Of him who robbed the widow, and devoured  
The orphans portion; of unquiet souls  
Risen from the grave to ease the heavy guilt,  
Of deeds in life concealed, of shapes that walk  
At dead of night, and clank their chains  
The torch of hell around the murderers  
At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,  
Gazing each others speechless and congealed  
With shivering sighs, till eager for the wint  
Around the beldame all erect they hang,  
Each trembling heart with grateful terror  
quelled"

We have seen a most faithful sketch of  
the after scene of such a tale and illustration  
by the London Etching Club. It is a sketch



portraying a dark and narrow passageway in which clustered together are three or four children creeping along cautiously to their bedrooms. While one of the elder brothers holds the small lamp on high, with wonder, fear and mirth displayed in their eyes as if expecting a mysterious figure to glide noiselessly from every corner and from behind each door, to startle them, they slowly and softly creep away to bed. Have we not done the same; and after some ghastly story when safely stowed away in bed, suddenly found ourselves staring at some mysterious shape in which we found a striking resemblance to the goblins and ghosts which were still fresh in our minds? Have we not pulled the bed-clothes over our heads and finally gone to sleep only to wake up in the morning and find the goblin still there but presto! how changed, for it was now only a towel or perhaps that article upon which Hood wrote, saying that a song? The fancies of children are strong. How those early impressions linger in the mind! Would that we could remember the lessons learned in after years with half the vividness and truth! How regarded too was the childish fancy of impossibility. Things improbable were no more of an impediment to it, than were the low roofed house-tops of the Grecian cities to the soaring



flight of Mercury when on the mission of  
the gods. Perhaps we have been a little  
too hasty. We remember reading many  
many years ago the story of a young  
prince who, presented by the fairies with  
a golden whistle was able by blowing  
upon it, to summon to his side what  
he desired. No hair-breadth escapes  
from danger were marvellous and we can  
still recollect how we held our breath  
upon one occasion when beset with  
enemies and all but captured, on which  
brought to his aid a beautiful chariot  
of gold which he mounted & was borne  
off in triumph through the air by the  
milk white <sup>winged</sup> steeds who were attached.  
But Prince — lost his whistle on one  
unfortunate day. He was reduced to  
great poverty and was compelled to  
sift ashes for a living. Here, he had our  
heartfelt sympathy, for we had begun  
to taste of the "nectared sweets" of that  
delightful occupation at that time.

While so engaged his eye one day caught  
sight of something that glittered among  
the ashes. He picked it up & what was  
his joy to find it was his whistle.  
He blew on it with all his might and  
the golden chariot & horses came as before  
and rescued him from his servitude.  
The first sceptical thought in our mind



was awakened by the fact that the  
whistle was uninjured after passing  
through the fire. We were afraid that  
all of the story could not be true. We  
doubted but still continued to read stories  
and tales. Robinson Crusoe and The  
Arabian Nights only fanned the  
flame and led us up to Dickens, Scott,  
Thackeray and then to poetry, the grand  
product of the imagination, perhaps of  
all our faculties.

The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from  
earth to heaven,

And as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name.

— Thus, "sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy  
child". The grand old masters of song  
have led the thought of the ages. Homer,  
Virgil, Dante, Shakespeare, Milton  
on their mighty pinions have borne  
upwards the thoughts of men, opened  
new worlds of existence and taught men  
to live their intellectual life.

Led by the desire for imaginative  
stimulus we attempt to imitate the tales  
which caused it. We can all doubtless  
recollect something of our early <sup>endeavors</sup> attempts  
at storytelling. Now they always commenced



## Time to Laugh

John Billings says "He does not take any risks" When he goes to a mules funeral he ~~does his weeping~~ stands at the head and weeps.

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One of our lady friends from the country was at the Exposition the other day. She stepped up to the new bicycle which was on exhibition in the billiard table stand, and folding her hands she exclaimed, Oh! this is one of those new gambling machines I suppose

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A worm in the chestnut, is worth two in the mouth

---

A man was sitting for his Photograph. The operator said "Now Sir, look kind o' pleasant - smile a little". The man smiled, and then the operator exclaimed, "Oh, that will never do! It is too wide for the instrument."

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A lady leaving home was thus addressed by her little boy - "Mamma will you remember to buy me a penny whistle and let it be a religious one, so that I can use it on Sundays."

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Reserved seats are sometimes expensive, A Gentleman while talking to a friend on the street, leaned his stick against a window & sat <sup>down</sup> on the stick. - It cost him 19.50



## Statistics & Facts.

The native population of New York only exceeds the foreign by 125,000. there are about 200,000 Irish. 150,000 Germans. 25,000 English. 20,000 colored. about 8,000 each French & Scotch, 2,000 Italian, Austrian, Poles, Swedes, a little over 1,000 each Russians & Hollanders, in 1870 there were only 12 Chinese while now it is estimated there are 700 or 800. These figures are largely from the 1870 Census.

Interesting to gas-consumers—In <sup>Paris</sup> France Gas costs 81¢ per m, last year the profits on the shares held by the government were \$1,600,000. After which there was enough to pay a dividend of 31%.

Railroads of the world. The United States has 82,000 miles Great Britain 16,794, France 14,000, Russia, 11,555 Austria 10,932 Germany; 17,181 India 6,527. Italy 4,815 while Peru Argentine Republic, Canada Egypt & Brazil have each nearly a 1000 miles.

About 100,000 seal-skins are taken each year in two islands belonging to the U.S. 300 miles west of Alaska yielding the inhabitants \$400,000 or an average of \$55.00 to each family of 5 and the government \$300,000 or  $\frac{1}{4}$ % of the money paid by the U.S. for the whole of Alaska.



## What Shall the Class Study?

As we are steadily approaching, and will soon reach the end of our course of study in English history, the above question demands a speedy and yet thoughtful answer. And each member will soon be called upon to cast his ballot for the study, which he may wish to be pursued: Under these circumstances it may not be out of place, but on the contrary very proper, as was suggested by our last editor, to devote a ~~at~~ small portion of this issue of the "Voice", to the consideration of this question, which must be of interest and importance to each and all of the members. It is not our desire to put forward any particular course of study, and try to convince the rest, that it is the one to be taken up. But we wish to ~~put~~ <sup>place</sup> before the class a few of the plans which have been suggested, at various times, by the members, and speak a little of their respective advantages or disadvantages. We say a little, because we have not given any more than a passing glance at each, and so our discussion will be by no means exhaustive. —

Our weekly meetings.



are held from 8 till 9.45 P.M., lasting one hour and three-quarters. The portion of this time which now is, or rather should be devoted to English history, is the first hour or from 8 till 9 o'clock. The rest of the evening is devoted to the critic's report, the paper and such other exercises as are regularly appointed on the programme. We suppose this latter portion of our meetings will continue to be filled with like exercises as it is now, so the question is; what shall we study during the first hour of our session? But when we try to answer it, we see how many and numberless are the studies from which we are to select one. How many the studies ~~are~~ which we might pursue with profit, and how difficult the task of deciding which will be the most profitable, especially before we have given them a trial. — There is so little that we know, so much for us yet to learn, that it is difficult to tell just what we should learn first, and just how we should set about learning it. He who knows nothing is the one who thinks he knows everything. But he who has attained some little knowledge, when he looks around him and sees himself surrounded on all sides by the



unknown, but not unknowable, he soon perceives, that though he penetrates as far as he like in any, or in all directions, he can never reach the limit. Though he devote his whole life to study and the pursuit of knowledge, death will overtake him while still following in its paths. We trust that the members of the "Phi Sigma" are coming to a knowledge of what lies ahead of them and around them; of what they should attain, or at least make their best efforts to attain. None of us are so situated, that we can devote all, or a large part of our time, to study. And indeed to some it may seem as if they could hardly get any time at all. - For the benefit and encouragement of these, let me quote a little from a sermon, which some of us heard a short time ago, and which we are sorry was not heard by all. The minister was attempting to show how much could be attained by devoting only a short time each day to useful reading. He said, that if a person were to give half an hour each day to reading, he could in this way read a book every two weeks or oftener. This would be about thirty books a year, and in five years one hundred and fifty. This number, he said,



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"would embrace all the English classics, all the histories, biographies, books of travel and of science that were worth the reading." I do think of that as the fruit of half an hour's reading each day.

Now we as a class have one hour each week to devote to some useful study. What shall it be? Some studies have already been proposed by the members. Let us glance rapidly over them. - It has been suggested that we continue the study of history. The importance of this study must be admitted by everyone. It is the history of nations, of men, of science, and things, that reveals unto us the past; full of experiences, experiments, triumphs and failures. And we may perhaps regard the history of nations, such as we have taken up in connection with England, as the basis of those other histories of men, & sciences. When we have traced man as a race, and as united and forming nations and communities, we will then be ready and able to study, and follow in his daily pursuits, the individual, and <sup>watch</sup> the development of the various sciences as they have been



evolved from mind and matter, and expanded from age to age. If we continue the study of national history, as we have been doing, the question naturally arises about what nation shall we study? Should it be ancient history or that which is later and approaches our own times? If the latter, the history of the United States has been spoken of. And undoubtedly it should properly precede that of the other countries of modern times. Both on account of its importance and connection with us personally, and also because of its close relationship to the history we have been studying. If it is thought better to take up some ancient history, we think that, that of Greece would be the best perhaps. Its characters and incidents are so often referred to in conversation and books, that, unless we are acquainted with its history, many thoughts and sentences are very ambiguous to us, which might otherwise be as clear as day. And then its history is very comprehensive. In the successive ages we view almost every form of government which the world has known. And converse with some of the greatest warriors, teachers, artists and philosophers



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that have ever lived. Without doubt its study would add much very valuable information to our stock of knowledge. It has also been proposed that as we follow a nation from age to age, we study more closely the individual men, and their actions, as we go along. This would necessitate our going over the ground slower, but I think the time would be well spent and that the whole history would be more indelibly fixed in our memory. Some of the members, perhaps, think we have had enough of history for a while, at least as we have been studying it during the last year. If a majority desire a change it will be better to take up something else. For, unless the class is interested in the study it takes up, it cannot expect to derive so much benefit, as it would from one in which it is more interested.

Another member suggests that we devote the time to reading, either history, as *Molly's Rise of the Dutch Republic*, or some of the English classics, as *Shakespeare*, or *Hilton*. As we have not had much experience in this method of study, we cannot say how it might succeed if introduced into the class. But



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it evidently has its advantages, or it would not be adopted by so many classes and circles, that assemble for intellectual improvement. If these readings were taken up, the members would not have to devote so much time outside of the class to class duties. But we are not ready to admit this as a point in its favor; indeed it may be construed just the other way. It might be well for the class to experiment upon this plan some evening, and then we could better judge what success might follow its permanent adoption.

Chemistry has also been spoken of as a good study to take up. Of course we could learn much in this branch of the sciences, but we fail to see that a knowledge of chemistry is as essential to us just now, as many of the other branches of knowledge are, branches with which we are by no means well acquainted with yet. And we must remember, that the experiments, which are the most interesting part of chemistry, would, for various reasons, have to be omitted in the class; and thus we are afraid would render an otherwise interesting study, dry and tedious. Still another plan is to give out a subject to be spoken upon



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and discussed at a certain meeting or at successive meetings, the members having had time given them beforehand to read it up, and see what they could find out about it. For instance the subject of the French Revolution, or the Crusades, the feudal system, or the Reformation might be given out and one person appointed to find out the causes, another the results, another the history &c. &c. After these had been given, a general discussion might follow until the subject had been looked at from all points of view, and in all its different phases. We could of course, in this way learn much concerning these important events and epochs, about which everyone is supposed to know something. But on the other hand our course of study would not be so connected and closely related one part to another as it would if we were pursuing a regular course of history.

Having dropped these few suggestions and believing we have said enough upon this subject for the present, we bid you goodnight.

Henry B. Wilson.